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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/330,418	06/11/1999	GARY N. TAYLOR	50261-2	9394

7590 05/30/2002  
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EXAMINER

LEE, SIN J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1752

DATE MAILED: 05/30/2002

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/330,418

Applicant(s)

TAYLOR ET AL.

Examiner

Sin J Lee

Art Unit

1752

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 December 2000 & 13 March 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 19-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 19-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 1752

1. Applicants filed a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) on this application on March 13, 2002. Since there was no amendment submitted with the request for filing the CPA, the following Office action is responsive to the previous amendment filed on December 27, 2000.

2. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the parent application prior to the filing of this Continued Prosecution Application under 37 CFR 1.53(d) and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action after the filing under 37 CFR 1.53(d). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

3. Claims 1-8 and 14-18 were canceled by applicants.

4. In view of applicants' amendment filed on December 27, 2000, the previously applied prior arts, Allen et al (5,786,131) and Johnson et al (Proceedings of SPIE-Int'l Society for

Art Unit: 1752

Optical Engineering, vol.3049, pg.997-1009), are not being used to reject present claims because Allen et al teach the previously claimed pendant acid-labile group, isobornyl group, and Johnson et al teach the previously claimed pendant acid-labile group, heteroalicyclic group. The present claims do not claim these specific acid-labile groups any longer.

5. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

6. Claims 24-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

In claim 24, applicants recite “the *polymer* consists essentially of the photoacid generator compound and the polymer”, and in claim 25, applicants recite “the *polymer* consists essentially of the photoacid generator compound, the polymer and a base component”. There is no support for these limitations in the present specification.

7. It is to be noted that the present claims 24-25 could not be rejected over Shida et al’207 nor over Goodall’WO’198 since neither of the references teach a polymer wherein a photoacid generator and a base component exist *as part of the polymer* as presently claimed. However, if applicants change the limitations of claims 24-25 from “the *polymer* consists essentially of . . .”

Art Unit: 1752

to "the *photoresist composition* consists essentially of . . ." the claim 24 will be rejected over Shida et al'207 as well as over Goodall'WO'198, and the claim 25 will be rejected over Shida et al'207 in view of Niki et al (5,658,706) (a reference which teaches the advantage of adding a base component to a positive chemically amplified resist composition) as well as over Goodall'WO'198 in view of Niki et al'708.

8. Claims 19-20, 23, and 26-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shida et al (6,060,207). *drop*

Shida et al teach a photosensitive material useful for forming a fine pattern in the manufacture of a semiconductor device and the like (col.1, lines 5-7). Shida teaches in col.8, lines 15-31 that their chemically amplified resist can be used *either* in the form of *positive type* or *negative type* resist depending on the selection of its component to be included. If the resist is to be used as *positive tone* resist, the prior art teaches that the resin component should preferably be a copolymer of vinyl compound having as a side chain a molecular structure represented by the formula (1) (see col.5) or an acrylic compound represented by the formula (5) (see col.6) *and* a monomer having a functional group to be decomposed by an acid. The prior art furthermore teaches that when the resin component is a copolymer of a monomer represented by the formula (2) (see col.6) and a compound containing a functional group to be decomposed or cross-linked by an acid, it can be formulated into a suitable chemically amplified resist by incorporating therein a *photo-acid generator*. As one of examples for the functional group to be decomposed with an acid, the prior art teaches ally ester (col.8, lines 40-50).

Art Unit: 1752

In its Example II-2, Shida et al teach a copolymer of allyl methacrylate (*an ally ester which is a compound containing functional group to be decomposed by an acid as taught by Shida*) and menthyl methacrylate (*a vinyl compound having as a side chain a molecular structure represented by Shida's formula (1) and also a monomer represented by Shida's formula (2)*).

Although Shida et al use the copolymer for a negative type resist in this specific example, since the prior art clearly teaches that such copolymer can be used in the form of positive type resist when combined with a photoacid generator, one of ordinary skill in the art would have immediately envisaged using the copolymer together with a photo-acid generator (instead of the polymerization initiator used in the Example II-2) to formulate a suitable chemically amplified positive resist with a reasonable expectation of providing a photosensitive material which is excellent in transparency to a light source of short wavelength and has a sufficient dry etch resistance. Therefore, Shida teaches the presently claimed positive-acting photoresist composition comprising a photoacid generator and a polymer that is free of aromatic groups and that comprises pendant acid-labile groups containing an alkenyl group.

With respect to present claim 23, since the copolymer of Example II-2 contains the menthyl methacrylate (which is a cycloalkyl ester) repeating unit, the prior art teaches the present invention of claim 23.

Since Shida teaches (col.34, lines 31-42) that their photoresist material dissolved in an organic solvent is coated on the surface of substrate such as silicon wafer, the prior art teaches the present inventions of claims 26-28..

Art Unit: 1752

9. Claims 19, 21, 23, and 26-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shida et al (6,060,207) in view of Goodall et al (WO 97/33198).

In Example II-148 to II-151, II-188 to II-191, Shida et al use a chemically amplified resist comprising a photoacid generator and a resin containing *isobornyl* methacrylate, menthyl methacrylate and methacrylic acid units. Also, in Examples II-156 to II-159, Shida teaches a chemically amplified resist comprising a photoacid generator and a resin containing *tetrahydropyranyl* methacrylate, menthyl methacrylate and methacrylic acid units. In all of these Examples, Shida coats the resist solution onto a *silicon wafer* before exposing it and then developing it to form a pattern.

Shida et al do not teach the presently claimed acid-labile group comprising optionally substituted cycloalkyl group having 3 or 4 ring carbon atoms. However, Goodall et al teach (in their claim 2) the equivalence (as protecting groups that are acid-cleavable by photoacid generators) of *isobornyl group* or *tetrahydropyranyl group* to *dicyclopropylmethyl group* and *dimethylcyclopropylmethyl group* (both of which are substituted cycloalkyl group having 3 ring carbon atoms as presently claimed). Since the *isobornyl group* or *tetrahydropyranyl group* (both of which are taught by Shida) are art-recognized equivalents to the *dicyclopropylmethyl group* and *dimethylcyclopropylmethyl group*, one of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to substitute the *isobornyl* or *tetrahydropyranyl group* of Shida et al's resin for the *dicyclopropylmethyl* or *dimethylcyclopropylmethyl group* with a reasonable expectation that these latter two would function the same way as the *isobornyl* or *tetrahydropyranyl group* to

Art Unit: 1752

provide a photosensitive material which is excellent in transparency to a short wavelength and has a sufficient dry etch resistance. Therefore, Shida et al in view of Goodall et al teach the presently claimed positive-acting photoresist composition comprising a photoacid generator and a polymer that is substantially free of aromatic groups and that comprises pendant acid-labile groups containing a cyclo alkyl group having 3 ring carbon atoms.

Since Shida's resin contains menthyl methacrylate (a cycloalkyl ester) repeating unit, the prior art teaches the present invention of claims 23 and 28.

10. Claims 19, 21-23, and 26-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Goodall et al (WO 97/33198).

Goodall et al teach a photoresist composition comprising a polycyclic polymer, which contains recurring acid labile groups that are pendant from the polymer backbone, and a photoacid generator. See particularly, pg.1, lines 10-12, lines 17-22, lines 25-26, pg.6, lines 24-27, pg.7, lines 6-7, lines 11-14, lines 26-29, pg.8, lines 1-30, pg.9, lines 1-10, pg.10, lines 11-30, pg.11, lines 1-6, pg.12, lines 1-14, pg.48, lines 11-13, pg.49, lines 9-16, pg.81, lines 5-7, claims 1-2, 11-12.

On pg.8, Goodall et al teach the acid labile polycyclic monomer having formula I which makes their polymer. According to the formula, the acid labile group  $-(CH_2)_nC(O)OR^*$  has to be always present, and ten examples for the  $R^*$  moiety (i.e., acid decomposable moiety) include isobornyl, tetrahydrofuranyl, tetrahydropyranyl, *dicyclopropylmethyl*, and *dimethylcyclopropylmethyl group*. Since there are only ten examples to choose from, it would





Art Unit: 1752

have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to choose dicyclopropylmethyl (*substituted cycloalkyl group having 3 ring carbon atoms*), or dimethylcyclopropylmethyl (*substituted cycloalkyl group having 3 ring carbon atoms*)) to be the R\* moiety with a reasonable expectation that any one of these would work well as the R\* moiety to provide polymer compositions that are transparent to short wavelength imaging radiation and are resistant to dry etching processes.

Furthermore, Goodall et al teach on pg.10 the optional second monomer of the formula II that is to be copolymerized with their acid labile polycyclic monomer. According to the formula, R<sup>5</sup> to R<sup>8</sup> can independently be -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>-C(O)OR'' (or any of the other six examples listed on lines 22-24 of pg.10) wherein R'' represent H, alkyl, *monocyclic* and polycyclic *cycloaliphatic moieties*, cyclic ethers, cyclic ketones and cyclic ester (lactones). For the specific examples for the cycloaliphatic monocyclic moiety, the prior art lists *cyclopropyl*, *cyclobutyl*, cyclopentyl, and cyclohexyl (pg.11, lines 1-3). First of all, for R<sup>5</sup> to R<sup>8</sup>, there are only seven examples to choose from, and therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to choose -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>-C(O)OR'' with a reasonable expectation of achieving polymer compositions that are transparent to short wavelength imaging radiation and are resistant to dry etching processes. Then there are only seven different kinds of examples for the R'' group, and thus it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to choose the monocyclic cycloaliphatic moiety such as cyclopropyl (*cycloalkyl group having 3 carbon atoms as presently claimed*) or cyclobutyl (*cycloalkyl group having 4 carbon atoms as presently claimed*) to be the R'' group with a reasonable expectation of achieving polymer compositions that are transparent to short

Art Unit: 1752

wavelength imaging radiation and are resistant to dry etching processes. Therefore, the prior art teaches the presently claimed polymer that is substantially free of aromatic groups and that comprises pendant acid labile groups that contain a cycloalkyl group having 3 or 4 ring carbon atoms. Also, since in the formula II,  $R^5$  to  $R^8$  *can independently* represent  $(CH_2)_n-C(O)OR''$  wherein  $R''$  can represent linear and branched alkyl (i.e., one of  $R^5$  to  $R^8$  can be  $(CH_2)_n-C(O)OR''$  wherein  $R''$  is cyclopropyl or cyclobutyl as discussed above and another one of  $R^5$  to  $R^8$  can be  $(CH_2)_n-C(O)OR''$  wherein  $R''$  is linear or branched alkyl group), the prior art also teaches the presently claimed alkyl ester groups of claim 23 and 28.

With respect to present claims 26-27, Goodall et al teach the coating of their resist solution onto a substrate such as a silicon wafer (see pg.1, lines 17-22, lines 25-26, pg.7, lines 11-14, pg.812, lines 5-7). Therefore, the prior art teaches the present inventions of these claims.

11. The following references cited here are for applicants's information.

WO 97/27515 teaches a resist composition suitable for KrF excimer laser comprising (I) a polymer prepared by polymerizing a (meth)acrylic ester containing an *allyl group* having at least two substituents (structure is shown on pg.7) with a monomer copolymerizable with the (meth)acrylic ester (such as methyl methacrylate, n-butyl methacrylate or t-butyl methacrylate according to PTO's on-site translation), and (ii) a photoacid generator.

Tomo et al (5,550,008) teach a photoresist composition comprising a substance containing a skeleton as at least a part of a main chain, the skeleton being obtained through polymerization of a vinyl alcohol type compound, at least some hydroxyl groups in the skeleton

Art Unit: 1752

being protected by acid-releasing protective group (see Formula (2) of col.2), and a photoacid generator. In that formula,  $R^0$ , which is a protective group capable of being release with acid, can be ethyl vinyl ether group ( $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-\text{O}-\text{CH}=\text{CH}_2$ ).

12. Applicants argue that Shida reports ally methacrylate for use in a negative resist whereas applicants claim a positive resist having acid labile groups wherein the acid-labile groups contain alkenyl group. Applicants further state that the cited polymer of the Shida does not contain acid-labile groups.

However, as explained above in paragraph 4 of this Office Action, Shida teaches that when the resin component is a copolymer of a *menthyl (meth)acrylate* and a compound containing a functional group to be decomposed or cross-linked by an acid, it can be formulated into a suitable chemically amplified resist by incorporating therein a *photo-acid generator*, and Shida teaches *ally ester* as one of examples for the functional group to be decomposed with an acid (i.e., *acid-labile group*). Therefore, it is the Examiner's position that Shida's copolymer of allyl methacrylate and menthyl methacrylate can be used in a positive chemically amplified resist when combined with a photoacid generator since the prior art *clearly* teaches that such copolymer can be used in the form of positive type resist when combined with a photoacid generator. One of ordinary skill in the art would have immediately envisaged using the copolymer together with a photo-acid generator (instead of the polymerization initiator used in the Example II-2) to formulate a suitable chemically amplified positive resist with a reasonable expectation of providing a photosensitive material which is excellent in transparency to a light

Art Unit: 1752

source of short wavelength and has a sufficient dry etch resistance. Therefore, applicants' arguments are found unpersuasive.

Applicants also argue that although Goodall is cited for a report of cyclopropylmethyl group, it is not seen that one would have any particular incentive to select that group out of the many possible alternatives as proposed by the instant rejection. Applicants furthermore argue that Goodall does not provide any suggestion of an acrylate polymer.

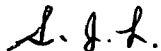
As already explained above in paragraph 8, since in Goodall's acid labile polycyclic monomer having formula I, the acid labile group  $-(CH_2)_nC(O)OR^*$  has to be always present, and since there are *only ten* examples to choose from, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to choose dicyclopropylmethyl (*substituted cycloalkyl group having 3 ring carbon atoms*), or dimethylcyclopropylmethyl (*substituted cycloalkyl group having 3 ring carbon atoms*)) to be the  $R^*$  moiety with a reasonable expectation that any one of these would work well as the  $R^*$  moiety to provide polymer compositions that are transparent to short wavelength imaging radiation and are resistant to dry etching processes. Therefore, in the absence of proof (submitted by applicants) that dicyclopropylmethyl or dimethylcyclopropylmethyl groups produce unexpected superior results over other possible groups for  $R^*$  moiety, applicants' argument is found unpersuasive. As to the second argument of applicants, new claims 23 and 28 are not claiming an acrylate polymer but merely alkyl ester groups, and as explained above in paragraph 8, Goodall teaches the presently claimed alkyl ester groups. Therefore, applicants' argument is found unpersuasive.

Art Unit: 1752


13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sin J. Lee whose telephone number is (703) 305-0504. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 am EST to 5:00 pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ms. Janet Baxter, can be reached on (703) 308-2303. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 305-3599 for after final responses or (703) 305-7718 for all other responses.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-0661.



S. Lee  
May 28, 2002

  
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